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IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims and reflects all changes currently being made to the claims. This listing supersedes all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A wavelength division multiplexed optical system, comprising:

a first optical node including a transponder having a test signal generator to generate a test signal, the test signal generator being adapted to generate the test signal by selectively outputting an error frame or a valid frame as the test signal;

a second optical node including a transponder having a monitoring circuit to monitor a received test signal; and

a light path through which at least optical communications normally are exchanged between the first and second optical nodes.

wherein the light path is tested by the monitoring circuit monitoring a bit error rate of the test signal in response to receiving the test signal from the first optical node through the light path.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Previously Presented) The optical system of Claim 1, wherein the valid frame is a valid client signal.